

STREET SMART

December 4, 2002

Governments
SANBAG
Working Together

Meeting Summary of the SANBAG Board of Directors

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■ Board OKs consultant, survey for Measure I extension

Board members gave the green light to hire a transportation consultant and to obtain proposals from public opinion surveying firms to examine voter attitudes toward extending Measure I, the county's half-cent transportation sales tax.

SANBAG hired Smith, Kempton and Watts to act as lead consultant in the early development of a Measure I extension plan. A committee to be appointed by the Board president will bring a recommendation for hiring a surveying firm at the January 8 meeting.



Data gained from the survey will help SANBAG decide whether to pursue an election to extend the measure. See full story on page 2.

■ SANBAG to study forming new regional planning agency

A new Metropolitan Planning Organization may be in the future for SANBAG and the Riverside County Transportation Commission, depending upon the outcome of a study of pros and cons of withdrawing from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

Board members voted to analyze the process needed to create a new planning organization for the Inland Empire, including legal, technical and financial issues. At the same time, SANBAG will work with SCAG to develop policies specific to the Inland Empire and enhance SCAG's sensitivity to local issues.

■ Cheers! SANBAG toasts Measure I, State Route 210



A 14-mile section of State Route 210 opened November 24, and SANBAG toasted this new way to travel and its local funding source, Measure I.

Under construction since 1998, this stretch, combined with six miles opened last year, marks the end of the first phase of construction.

Construction of the final eight miles through Rialto and San Bernardino will start in 2003. Route 210 is SANBAG's largest Measure I project.

Gary Moon, SANBAG's director of freeway construction, leads a sparkling cider toast to State Route 210 and to Measure I, the freeway's local funding source.

■ Making a list, checking it twice ... for federal funding

Never naughty and always nice, SANBAG is working hard on its wish list for upcoming federal transportation funding.

The current six-year federal transportation authorization act, known as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), will expire next year and is scheduled to be reauthorized in October 2003.

SANBAG will seek the support of local congressional representatives to fund these high priority projects. Making the wish list are:

- Needles Highway widening and realignment
- Bus Rapid Transit system between Loma Linda and San Bernardino
- High Desert Corridor
- Separation of railroad tracks and surface streets in Barstow, Ontario, San Bernardino, Colton and Hesperia
- New or improved interchanges in Loma Linda, San Bernardino, Fontana, Victorville, Hesperia, Rialto, Rancho Cucamonga and Chino
- Transportation Management Center
- New corridor between Moreno Valley and San Bernardino County
- Separation of BNSF and Union Pacific train tracks at the Colton Crossing

Down the Road ...

- Dec. 11: Commuter Rail Committee, 12 noon
- Dec. 18: Plans & Programs Committee, 12 noon

January meetings will be held one week later than usually scheduled.

Measure I extension decision to involve multiple factors

Survey results critical in decision making process

The telephone rings, and a survey representative asks, "Would you support the extension of Measure I, San Bernardino County's half-cent transportation sales tax?" Data from this question and others like it will be major factors in determining whether SANBAG will ask voters in 2004 to extend Measure I after it expires in 2010.

Board members voted to hire Smith, Kempton and Watts, a transportation consulting firm, to begin the process of developing a Measure I extension program. They also directed staff to seek proposals from survey firms to conduct a wide-ranging study of public opinion attitudes about transportation priorities. This month's issue of **"Measuring Success"** examines the issues associated with the decision of whether or not to place a sales tax extension on the ballot.

Measure I History

San Bernardino County voters approved Measure I, a half-cent sales tax for transportation, in November 1989 with a 59.8% majority. This 20-year tax has been used to build and widen area freeways, improve streets and roads, create the Metrolink train system, support public transit and develop other programs to enhance the mobility of county residents. Since its passage, the requirement for the adoption of transportation sales taxes has been increased to a two-thirds majority vote.



Statewide Election Results, November 2002

Across California, five counties had sales tax measures on the ballot for voter consideration. Of these five, only one -- Riverside County -- achieved the two-thirds vote required for passage. The other counties received a simple majority, but did not reach the two-thirds needed. The votes were as follows:

■ Madera County:	Yes - 50.7%	No - 49.3%
■ Fresno County:	Yes - 53.7%	No - 46.3%
■ Solano County:	Yes - 59.9%	No - 40.1%
■ Merced County:	Yes - 61.3%	No - 38.7%
■ Riverside County:	Yes - 69.1%	No - 30.9%

The Importance of Surveying

Response to a "cold question" of whether or not a voter would support the extension of Measure I is critical to the decision to pursue an election. In Riverside County, support ranged from 65% to 75% in initial polls and was a key factor in the decision to proceed with an election. If a survey is authorized by the Board of Directors next month, the resulting data will allow SANBAG to weigh its options in the near future. Throughout Riverside County's campaign, three additional surveys were conducted to gauge voter opinion.



Election Dates to be Considered

In July, the Board of Directors set a tentative date of November 2004 for a Measure I extension election. Board members and staff members will seek the advice of its transportation consultant regarding whether to seek a November 2004 or a March 2004 election date.

Expenditure Plan

The most important factor in an extension election is the development of an expenditure plan. This tells voters how the funds generated by the half-cent sales tax would be spent. It provides a list of major projects and explains the system to be used to divide the funds across the county.

Should the surveying results be favorable to proceed with an election, SANBAG staff will develop a draft expenditure plan to present to policy committees and the public in May or June. This schedule would provide sufficient time for the Board to review, modify and adopt the plan prior to the election.

